

Target Reading Skill: Using Word Analysis

Recognize Word Origins

Etymology is the study of the history of words. Instead of spending hours memorizing long lists of words and their meanings, you can increase your vocabulary by learning about word origins or etymologies. When you learn the root that goes with a word, it is almost impossible to forget the word's definition. Etymology teaches the origins of all word parts (roots, prefixes, and suffixes) so that long words that initially may seem hard to understand can be easily learned or deciphered.

Take for example the word *monologue*. The word may be unfamiliar to you, but if you know that the root *logue* means having to do with speech or recitation and that *mono* means one, you can conclude that a monologue involves one person speaking. Then if you know that the prefix *dia* means two, you can conclude that a *dialogue* involves words or speech between two people. You could also guess that a *travelogue* is probably a person's discussion of his or her travels.

Directions: Based on the root (source) listing in the first column and the English words you are familiar with listed in the second column, try to determine the meaning of the Latin root listing.

Root (Source)	English Words	Meaning
bene	benefit, beneficial, benevolent	
dic, dict	dictate, diction, dictation	
scrib, script	scribble, manuscript, scribe, script	
vac	vacate, vacant, evacuate	